

## **PRESS RELEASE**

From the Desk of Dr. James Hockenberry

Superintendent, Center ISD

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Center High School has been named one of the nation's best by *US News and World Report* and awards CHS with a Bronze Medal. Superintendent of Center ISD, Dr. James Hockenberry says, "This award is very significant. It is an objective review of the school and considers many factors in its report and designation." U.S. News reviewed 21,035 public schools in 49 states in the US and the District of Columbia. Of those 21,000, 410 out of 1850 high schools in Texas made the rankings, including Center High School.

According to [www.usnews.com/education](http://www.usnews.com/education), to produce the 2013 *U.S. News and World Report Best High Schools Rankings*, U.S. News teamed up with the Washington, D.C. based *American Institutes for Research*, one of the largest behavioral and social science research organizations in the world. This institute implemented U.S. News' comprehensive rankings methodology, which is based on the key principles that a great high school must serve all of its students well, not just those who are college-bound, and that it must be able to produce measurable academic outcomes to show the school is successfully educating its student body across a range of performance indicators. A three-step process determines the Best High Schools. The first two steps ensure that the schools serve all students well, using performance on state proficiency tests as the benchmarks. For those schools that make it past the first two steps, a third step assesses the degree to which schools prepare students for college-level work.

Center High School documented a total enrollment of 615 students, 51% male and 49% female and a total minority enrollment of 55%. *U.S. News* calculates test score values based on student performance on state exit exams and internationally available exams on college-level readiness. Center showed a 95% proficiency in Reading and 94% proficiency in Math.

Although not appropriately reflected in this report, college and career readiness is an integral part of the high school's main focus. This report measures AP program enrollment where Center High School's main focus is dual-credit. Dual-credit is a college and career readiness pathway where a student can earn both college hours and high school credit simultaneously. A very large

number of our CHS students take part in this opportunity. As part of that emphasis, the district pays the tuition for the first 12-18 hours. We are also expanding our Career and Technical Education Programs. For example, Animal Science and Therapeutic Science pathways will be available to CHS students beginning next year. In short, Center ISD is creating opportunities and not strictly focusing on state assessment. There is so much more learning available that goes beyond the narrow and current accountability system.

Hockenberry continued, "It is a great honor for the entire district. When you consider the size and diversity and also include a reduction in funding by well over a million dollars, it then becomes an exceptional honor for the district. Center ISD is most proud of all its students and teachers. This is a district honor that will be cherished and we also want to congratulate all schools that have earned such a designation."